

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 3 and 9 to 12 are pending. Claims 4 to 8 are currently canceled. Claims 1 to 3 are currently amended. Claims 9 to 12 have been added. Reconsideration of the application is requested. Support for the amendments can be found, for example, as described in the following table:

Current Claim Number	Support
1	Figure 2 and pages 6-9
2	Figure 2 and pages 6-9
3	Figure 2 and pages 6-9
9	Previous claim 4 and page 9
10	Previous claim 5 and page 9
11	Previous claim 6 and page 9
12	Previous claim 7 and page 9

Objection to the Drawings

The Examiner has objected to the Drawings, specifically Figure 2 believing that the numerals 27-28-29-30 on the left figure of Figure 2 should be labeled 21-22-23-24 as the figure on the right side of Figure 2 are labeled. A review of the specification, showed that the numerals 27-28-29-30 and 21-22-23-24 were transposed. The appropriate correction has been made and a corrected figures sheet is included with this response.

§ 112 Rejections

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

The Examiner states that the recitation “and a ratio of areas of the two regions is changed at least in one direction” in claim 1 is unclear as what is meant by “the ratio is changed”. For the purpose of examination, the Examiner was interpreted as the ratio of the opaque region to the transparent region is either increased or decreased. Applicants have amended claims 1-3 and rewritten claims 4-7 as new claims 9-12 and canceled claim 8. Applicants believe that the new

and amended claims clarify what is meant by “the ratio is changed” and that the Examiner’s interpretation that the ratio of the opaque region to the transparent region is either increased or decreased is not correct as is apparent in the new and amended claims.

In summary, Applicant submits that the rejection of claims 1-8 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, has been overcome, and that the rejection should be withdrawn.

§ 102 Rejections

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2002-002192 (Kentaro) “Kentaro”.

The Kentaro reference describes a film for decorative ornamentation that has an applied gradation pattern in one direction or more. It is clear from review of the figures and description of Kentaro, it is clear that Kentaro does not disclose, teach or suggest or enable the use of a gradation pattern wherein said gradation pattern comprises an opaque region, an opaque region having a plurality of discrete transparent regions adjacent to the opaque region, a transparent region having a plurality of discrete opaque regions adjacent to the opaque region having a plurality of discrete transparent regions, and a transparent region adjacent to the transparent region having a plurality of discrete opaque regions. Rather Kentaro uses a continuous gradation from opaque to transparent without an opaque region having a plurality of discrete transparent regions adjacent to the opaque region, or a transparent region having a plurality of discrete opaque regions adjacent to the opaque region having a plurality of discrete transparent regions adjacent to the transparent region. There is nothing in the Kentaro reference disclosing, teaching, suggesting or enabling the use of discrete transparent regions in an opaque region or discrete opaque regions in a transparent region so the Kentaro reference cannot anticipate the claims as amended or the new claims, and the rejection of claims 1-8 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kentaro should be withdrawn.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Examination and reconsideration of the application as amended is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

December 9, 2008

Date

By: /Jeffrey M. Olofson/

Jeffrey M. Olofson, Reg. No.: 45,701

Telephone No.: 651-736-7906

Office of Intellectual Property Counsel
3M Innovative Properties Company
Facsimile No.: 651-736-3833